

Memo

To: McHenry County Healthcare Providers, Emergency Departments, Immediate Care Centers, and Infection Preventionists

From: Susan Karras, RN, BSN
Communicable Disease Program Coordinator

Date: January 30, 2015

Re: **Measles: Infection Control Guidelines and Testing**

Measles is highly contagious and is spread through the airborne route; non-immune patients, staff, and hospital visitors are at risk of being exposed to measles. Any hospitalized patient who is suspected of having measles should be immediately placed in airborne isolation. Office examination rooms, without negative airflow, should not be used for up to 2 hours.

Healthcare providers should maintain a high level of suspicion for measles and recognize clinical features and risk factors:

- Prodrome of fever, conjunctivitis, cough, coryza, and malaise.
- 3 to 5 days following symptom onset a maculopapular rash appears on the face and spreads downward over the entire body (Immunocompromised patients may not exhibit a rash).
- Patients should be asked about vaccination status, as well as, any history of international travel, contact with foreign visitors, visiting domestic venues frequented by international travelers, or possible exposure to a measles patient in the 3 weeks prior to symptom onset.
- A small percentage of people born before 1957 **are** susceptible to measles.

Please contact the McHenry County Department of Health immediately at 815-334-4500 if you suspect that a patient may have measles. Laboratory analysis should be completed for all suspect cases whose symptoms and clinical presentation are clinically compatible.

- Recommended testing for measles is by RT-PCR (respiratory specimens) **and** IgM serology.
- Specimens can be submitted to the IDPH Springfield Laboratory and **must be facilitated by the McHenry County Department of Health** who will provide an authorization number for the specimens.